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OLC 72-0650

26 May 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: White House Meeting on Handling of SALT Announcement

1. This morning Mr. Carl Duckett, DDS&T, and I attended a 9:30 meeting in the Cabinet Room of the White House involving the handling of publicity and congressional briefings on the impending announcement of a SALT agreement. The meeting was chaired by General Al Haig and participants included:

White House
Chuck Colson
Tom Korologos
John Lehman

State Department
Dave Abshire

Defense
Rady Johnson
Gardiner Tucker

ACDA
Spurgeon Keeny

AEC
Jim Schlesinger

USIA
Ken Towery

2. General Haig opened by saying the agreement would be signed at 8:00 p.m. Moscow time today (1:00 p.m. local) but the receipt of the text in Washington would be delayed some hours. He cautioned against any premature disclosure or speculation on the text.

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3. John Lehman is preparing "primers" on the implications of the agreement for "background use only" of those present.

4. It was emphasized that any speculation that the agreement would result in reduction of the defense budget should be forcefully discouraged. Haig said the agreement should be depicted as a "breakthrough," having the effect of slowing down the Soviet buildup in strategic weapons but no immediate effect on U.S. systems. He said any comment should include emphasis on the fact that the agreement would not have been possible if the U.S. had not maintained an adequate posture of strength.

5. It is planned that Jim Schlesinger will replace Peter Peterson on a scheduled Sunday "talk show," and Colson said an early statement by Laird would reassure the hawks. It was also agreed that Gerry Smith should make a plain site statement upon his arrival in the U.S. The White House is planning phone calls to a number of influential private figures including: John McCloy, Governor Scranton, Nelson Rockefeller, LBJ, McGeorge Bundy, Bill Bundy, Walt Rostow, and George Ball. When John McCone's name came up Mr. Duckett suggested that Mr. Helms might give him a call.

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Legislative Counsel

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